

# STATISTICS

Try as we may to prevent underage alcohol possession and consumption, illegal alcohol sales to minors continue to be a significant problem.

- In calendar year 2003, 851 violations for sales, furnishing or allowing persons under 21 to consume alcohol were written.
- On a monthly basis roughly 125 sale to minor violations are written. The individual offenders are listed each month in a report posted to the Commission website at [www.michigan.gov/dleg](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg)
- In 1999, a Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) cooperative decoy operation conducted with Detroit area police departments found 281 off-premises (package/party stores) refused to sell alcohol to minors but a little over half, 283 DID sell to minors (only 18 and 19 yr olds used as the decoy). In 55 of these cases the clerk checked the young person's ID and sold to the minor anyway!

# TRICKS OF THE TRADE

I

Prevention is the key! The following ID tips have been offered by local police officers:

## FAKE ID's

- Check the size, thickness and color of the ID for anything unusual.
- Check the placement, size and typeface of the letters and numbers, nothing on the ID should be blurry.
- Look closely at the state seal to make sure it is correct and exact.

## ALTERED ID's

- Check for numbers that have been scratched or bleached out and inked over, or cut out and reinserted.
- Look for rough spots around the edges and over the photo where laminate may have been altered.

## BORROWED ID's

- Compare the photo with the person presenting the ID.
- Ask the presenter to sign his/her name on a sheet of paper and compare the signature to the one on the ID.
- Ask the presenter to verify personal data on the ID.
- Request alternate pieces of identification.

# TRICKS OF THE TRADE

II

Training staff members is a very important part of preventing sales to minors. Anyone who sells or serves alcohol can benefit from attending one of the quality programs offered around the state of Michigan. Four programs that have been evaluated by, and approved by, the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) are:

TAM® – Techniques for Alcohol Management  
1-800-292-2896 or [www.mlba.org](http://www.mlba.org)

TIPS® – Training for Intervention Procedures  
1-800-438-8477 or [www.gettips.com](http://www.gettips.com)

BarCode® – Serving Alcohol Responsibly  
1-800-968-9668 or [www.michiganrestaurant.org](http://www.michiganrestaurant.org)

C.A.R.E.® Controlling Alcohol Risks Effectively  
1-800-344-3320 or [www.ei-ahla.org](http://www.ei-ahla.org)

Under any of these approved training programs servers should learn to identify visible signs of intoxication, factors that impact intoxication (rate of drinking, gender, food consumption, et al.), basic alcohol content among different types of drinks, legal hours for sales and service, penalties related to minor sales and consumption and the various acceptable forms of personal identification as well as several other important server techniques.

## AFTER THE FACT

The sale of alcohol to a minor is a significant violation. Fines for this type of violation can be as high as \$1,000 and multiple offenses will jeopardize the liquor license for an establishment. In 2003, 148 licenses were revoked or revoked unless transferred to a new owner based on violation history and other factors. Licensees who lose their license due to repeated sales to minors are not allowed to own or have any part in another liquor license for a minimum period of two years (the vast majority of revoked licensees are never able to get re-licensed due to poor operating records).

If your licensed establishment is cited for selling alcohol to a minor you will be issued a formal violation complaint prepared by the MLCC's Assistant Attorney General. You can then either acknowledge the violation and pay a fine or complete a suspension of the license period, or you may request a hearing regarding the violation. At the hearing your evidence will be heard as well as the testimony of the minor and enforcement officers who were present at the scene. The MLCC Commissioners or a designated Administrative Law Judge will then determine responsibility and impose the appropriate penalty according to the Michigan Liquor Control Code.

Following a violation you should take immediate action to prevent any further infractions.

## WEB LINKS

Local businesses report that techniques such as wearing "no sale under 21" buttons, displaying posters regarding underage drinking dangers, and using automated cash register programs are helpful techniques for minimizing attempts by minors to purchase alcohol. If a young person knows that their ID will be looked at with scrutiny and knows that underage sales are not tolerated in your establishment, he or she is less likely to try and purchase alcohol from you.

In addition, organizations like the Century Council ([www.centurycouncil.org](http://www.centurycouncil.org)) have lists of prevention and education programs designed to help liquor licensees and their staff become familiar with dangers, cues and laws related to alcohol.

Some other useful web links are:

The Initiative Today  
[www.initiative.org/](http://www.initiative.org/)

Alliance Against Underage Drinking  
[www.2young2drink.com](http://www.2young2drink.com)

Center for Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws, [www.udetc.org](http://www.udetc.org)

Pennsylvanians Against Underage Drinking  
[www.alcoholfreeyouth.org](http://www.alcoholfreeyouth.org)

## PREVENTING ALCOHOL SALES TO MINORS

[www.reportunder21.com](http://www.reportunder21.com)

**WE ALL  
LOSE  
WHEN KIDS BUY  
BOOZE!**

**1-866-893-2121  
Toll Free Hotline  
Report Underage Sales & Service!  
Michigan Liquor Control Commission**